

feeding the wire belts with the fiber suspension and the web being generated therebetween downstream of the forming roll between a plurality of first drainage strips, which are positioned within the loop of the first wire belt for contacting the first wire belt, and a plurality of second drainage strips, which are positioned within the loop of the second wire belt for contacting the second wire belt, the first strips being shifted in position along the path of the wire belts with respect to the second strips so that the first and second strips are offset and in a non-opposing relationship;

resiliently supporting the first drainage strips against the first wire belt that the strips contact;

rigidly supporting the second drainage strips against the second wire belt;

feeding the wire belts with the web therebetween downstream of said drainage strips across a stationary drainage element and then across a suction roll in the twin wire zone such that as the wire belts travel over the stationary drainage element and over said suction roll, water is drained through the wire belt in contact with said stationary drainage element and with said suction roll; and

maintaining the twin wire zone apart from said single forming roll and said suction roll free of rolls which would deflect the twin wire zone.

338. (Amended) A twin-wire former for the production of a paper web from a fiber suspension, the twin wire former comprising:

first and second web forming wire belts which travel along a path together for forming a twin wire zone of the twin wire former, with the web between the wire belts as the wire belts travel along the path through the twin wire zone, neither wire belt defining a single wire predrainage zone;

each wire belt forming an endless loop;

the twin wire zone having a first section which includes a single forming roll at the start of the path of the wire belts through the twin wire zone; supports which support the

wire belts for forming a wedge shaped entrance slot into the first section;

a fiber suspension supplying headbox having an outlet placed and directed for delivering fiber suspension from the headbox to the wedge shaped entrance slot of the first section of the twin wire zone;

said single forming roll having an open surface to enable drainage of water from the fiber suspension and being curved along the path of the wire belts through the twin wire zone, the single forming roll being engaged by one of the wire belts and being arranged for curving the path of both wire belts around the single forming roll after the entrance of the suspension into the entrance slot;

the twin wire zone having a second section following the first section along the path of the wire belts through the twin wire zone; in the second section, a plurality of the first drainage strips are positioned within the loop of the first wire belt and are for contacting the first wire belt; in the second section, a plurality of second drainage strips are positioned within the loop of the second wire belt and are for contacting the second wire belt; the first strips being shifted in position along the path of the wire belts with respect to the second strips so that the first and second strips are offset and in a non-opposing relationship; a first strip support which resiliently supports the first drainage strips against the first wire belt that the first strips contact;

a second strip support which supports the second drainage strips rigidly against the second wire belt;

the twin wire zone having a third section following the second section along the path of the wire belts through the twin wire zone; drainage elements in the third section, for being engaged by one of the wire belts as the wire belts travel over the drainage elements, the drainage elements including at least one stationary dewatering element followed by a suction roll and having an open surface to enable water to be drained through the wire belt in contact therewith; and

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the twin wire zone apart from said single forming roll and said suction roll being free of rolls which deflect the twin wire zone.

5/ 35. (Amended) A method for the production of a paper web from a fiber suspension in a twin wire former comprising:

causing first and second web forming wire belts to travel along a path together to form a twin wire zone of the twin wire former, with the web between the wire belts as the wire belts travel along the path through the twin wire zone, each wire belt forming an endless loop;

feeding the wire belts across a stationary curved forming shoe at the start of the path through the twin wire zone;

supporting the wire belts such as to form a wedge shaped entrance slot into the twin wire zone;

supplying a fiber suspension from the head box directly to the wedge shaped entrance slot of the twin wire zone;

draining water from the fiber suspension by means of the forming shoe in order to start the forming of the web from the fiber suspension;

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feeding the wire belts with the fiber suspension and the web being generated therebetween downstream of the forming shoe between a plurality of first drainage strips, which are positioned within the loop of the first wire belt for contacting the first wire belt, and a plurality of second drainage strips, which are positioned within the loop of the second wire belt for contacting the second wire belt, the first strips being shifted in position along the path of the wire belts with respect to the second strips so that the first and second strips are offset and in a non-opposing relationship;

resiliently supporting the first drainage strips against the first wire belt that the strips contact;

rigidly supporting the second drainage strips against the second wire belt;

feeding the wire belts with the web therebetween downstream of said drainage strips across a stationary drainage element and then across a suction roll in the twin wire zone such

that as the wire belts travel over the stationary drainage element and the suction roll, water is drained through the wire belt in contact with said stationary drainage element and the suction roll; and

maintaining the twin wire zone apart from said suction roll free of rolls which would deflect the twin wire zone.

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737. (Amended) A twin-wire former for the production of a paper web from a fiber suspension, the twin wire former comprising:

first and second web forming wire belts which travel along a path together for forming a twin wire zone of the twin wire former, with the web between the wire belts as the wire belts travel along the path through the twin wire zone, neither wire belt defining a single wire predrainage zone;

each wire belt forming an endless loop;

the twin wire zone having a first section which includes a stationary curved forming shoe at the start of the path of the wire belts through the twin wire zone; supports which support the wire belts for forming a wedge shaped entrance slot into the first section;

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a fiber suspension supplying headbox having an outlet placed and directed for delivering fiber suspension from the headbox to the wedge shaped entrance slot of the first section of the twin wire zone;

said stationary curved forming shoe having an open surface to enable drainage of water from the fiber suspension and being curved along the path of the wire belts through the twin wire zone, the forming shoe being engaged by one of the wire belts and being arranged for curving the path of both wire belts around the forming shoe after the entrance of the suspension into the entrance slot;

the twin wire zone having a second section following the first section along the path of the wire belts through the twin wire zone; in the second section, a plurality of the first drainage strips are positioned within the loop of the first wire belt and are for contacting the first wire belts; in the second